

12736 GAO 00412 PL 10-11



DECISION

**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES**
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

FILE: B-194339

DATE: February 7, 1980

MATTER OF: Lieutenant Commander Richard E. Tisdel, USN

DIGEST: A military member traveling on temporary duty shared a lodging accommodation with another person (his wife) who was not entitled to lodging at Government expense. In the absence of regulations providing otherwise, if he would have used the same accommodation at the single occupancy rate had he not been accompanied, he may be reimbursed on the basis of such single occupancy rate rather than at one-half of the double occupancy rate. If the hotel makes no distinction in rates between single and double occupancy, then the member may be reimbursed on the basis of the full room cost.

A certifying officer of the Defense Intelligence Agency requests our decision as to whether Lieutenant Commander Richard E. Tisdel's per diem may be computed by using the full cost of hotel accommodations he shared with his wife while on temporary duty in France. Lieutenant Tisdel objected to the initial processing of his travel voucher which limited reimbursement to the single rate for hotel occupancy.

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The general rules which have been applied in similar situations involving civilian employees are as follows. The only travel expenses the Government is obligated to pay are those of the individual employee. Any additional expenses incurred because his family accompanies him are personal expenses to be borne by him. B-158941, May 4, 1966. However, if the cost of the hotel would have been the same if the employee had been alone--that is, in effect, if the hotel made no distinction in rates between single and double occupancy, then the employee is entitled to reimbursement on the basis of the full room charge paid. In the usual case in which the rates for single and double occupancy differ, we have held that a traveler may be reimbursed on the basis of the single occupancy rate rather than at one-half of the

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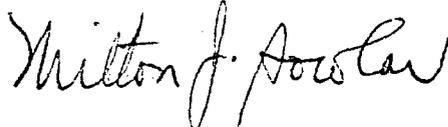
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[Entitlement to Per Diem]

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double occupancy rate so long as he would have used the same accommodation had he not been accompanied. B-187344, February 23, 1977. In the absence of regulations prescribed under 37 U.S.C. 404 and 405 (1976), providing a method for determining allowable per diem for military members in such cases, similar rules should be applied here.

From the record submitted, it is not clear which of these factual situations applies; however, it appears that the hotel where Commander Tisdell stayed did have a single occupancy rate which presumably would have been charged had he been alone. If that is the case, that rate should be used in computing his per diem. The certifying officer needs to determine the facts and then certify the appropriate allowable amount.



For the Comptroller General
of the United States